

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

Claim 1(currently amended): A wind turbine rotor including a rotor hub (3) and a plurality of blades (4), and where each blade root (16) is connected to said rotor hub through a pitch bearing (5) in such a manner that the pitch angle of the blade is adjustable by a turning of the blade about its longitudinal axis relative to the rotor hub, and where the blade is provided with at least one electrically conducting lightening down-conductor (6) extending in the longitudinal direction of the blade to the blade root and being electrically isolated from the pitch bearing (5), and where a spark gap (15) is provided between the lightning down-conductor and the rotor hub, said spark gap (15) being adapted to conduct a lightning current passing through the lightning down-conductor to the rotor hub, **characterised in that** a sliding contact connection (7, 12) is provided parallel to the spark gap (15) between the lightning down-conductor (6) and the rotor hub (3), said sliding contact connection ensuring electrical contact between said lightening down-conductor (6) and said rotor hub (3) irrespective of the pitch angle of the blade.

Claim 2 (original): A wind turbine rotor according to claim 1, **characterised in that** the sliding contact connection includes a collector shoe (12) fixedly mounted on the rotor hub (3), and an electrically conducting contact member (7) connected to the lightening down-conductor (6) of the blade and extending along a portion of the circumference of the blade root (16).

Claim 3 (original): A wind turbine rotor according to claim 1, **characterised in that** the sliding contact connection includes a collector shoe (12) fixedly mounted on the blade root (16), and an electrically conducting contact member (7) in form of a rail mounted on the rotor hub (3).

Claim 4 (previously amended): A wind turbine rotor according to claim 2, **characterised in that** the spark gap (15) is provided between the contact member (7) and a spark gap member (11).

Claim 5 (original): A wind turbine rotor according to claim 4, **characterised in that** the collector shoe (12) and the spark gap member (11) are combined in one contact unit (8).

Claim 6 (previously amended): A wind turbine rotor according to claim 1, **characterised in that** the lightning down-conductor (6) is connected to a lightning receptor adjacent the tip of the blade.

Claim 7 (previously amended): A wind turbine including a nacelle (2), a rotor shaft (17) and a wind turbine rotor according to claim 1.

Claim 8 (original): A wind turbine according to claim 7, **characterised in that** the rotor hub (3) includes an electrically conducting rotor hub conductor connected to the part (7; 11) of the spark gap (15) which is arranged on the rotor hub side, said rotor hub conductor further being connected through an additional spark gap to an electrically conducting nacelle conductor mounted on the nacelle (2).

Claim 9 (original): A wind turbine according to claim 8, **characterised in that** the rotor hub conductor is electrically connected to the part (7; 12) of the slide contact connection which is arranged on the rotor hub side, said rotor hub conductor further being connected to the nacelle conductor through an additional sliding contact connection.

Claim 10 (original): A wind turbine according to claim 9, **characterised in that** the nacelle conductor includes an annular contact member arranged coaxially with the rotor shaft (17), and that the rotor hub conductor is connected to an additional spark gap member and an additional collector shoe which defines the additional spark gap and the additional sliding contact connection, respectively, between the nacelle conductor and the annular contact member.

Claim 11 (previously amended): A wind turbine according to claim 8, **characterised in that** the rotor hub conductor is electrically isolated from the rotor shaft (17).

Claim 12 (previously presented): A wind turbine rotor according to claim 3, **characterised in that** the spark gap (15) is provided between the contact member (7) and a spark gap member (11).

Claim 13 (previously presented): A wind turbine rotor according to claim 2, **characterised in that** the lightning down-conductor (6) is connected to a lightning receptor adjacent the tip of the blade.

Claim 14 (previously presented): A wind turbine rotor according to claim 3, **characterised in that** the lightning down-conductor (6) is connected to a lightning receptor adjacent the tip of the blade.

Claim 15 (previously presented): A wind turbine rotor according to claim 4, **characterised in that** the lightning down-conductor (6) is connected to a lightning receptor adjacent the tip of the blade.

Claim 16 (previously presented): A wind turbine rotor according to claim 5, **characterised in that** the lightning down-conductor (6) is connected to a lightning receptor adjacent the tip of the blade.

Claim 17 (previously presented): A wind turbine including a nacelle (2), a rotor shaft (17) and a wind turbine rotor according to claim 2.

Claim 18 (previously presented): A wind turbine including a nacelle (2), a rotor shaft (17) and a wind turbine rotor according to claim 3.

Claim 19 (new): A wind turbine rotor comprising:
a rotor hub;
at least one blade having a blade root;

at least one pitch bearing, each of the at least one blade being connected to the rotor hub through a respective one of the at least one pitch bearing so that a pitch angle of the blade is adjustable by a turning of the blade about its longitudinal axis relative to the rotor hub;

an electrically conducting lightening down-conductor extending in the longitudinal direction of the blade to the blade root and being electrically isolated from the pitch bearing;

a spark gap provided between the lightning down-conductor and the rotor hub, said spark gap being adapted to conduct a lightning current passing through the lightning down-conductor to the rotor hub; and

a sliding contact connection provided parallel to the spark gap between the lightning down-conductor and the rotor hub, said sliding contact connection ensuring electrical contact between the lightening down-conductor and the rotor hub irrespective of the pitch angle of the blade.